

INTRODUCTION

“OUR FORCES TODAY RECOGNIZE THAT DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IS GOOD MANAGEMENT, GOOD CITIZENSHIP, GOOD STEWARDSHIP, AND A GOOD WAY TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE FORCES. AND WE’RE PROVING THAT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT CAN BE A LEAN, MEAN FIGHTING MACHINE—AND A LEAN, GREEN FIGHTING MACHINE AT THE SAME TIME.”
—WILLIAM S. COHEN, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

This Report to Congress documents the accomplishments made by the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Environmental Cleanup Program during fiscal year 1997 (FY97). As demonstrated throughout the report, the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) has made significant progress in protecting the environment and reducing risks to U.S. troops, their families, and local communities from pollutants due to past DoD practices. In addition to FY97 achievements, the report addresses the technical and financial status (as of the end of FY97) of the program and outlines plans and funding requirements for future progress. DERP goals and performance metrics used to evaluate progress are discussed, and projections for the entire Environmental Restoration Program are provided. The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security), in cooperation with the Military Departments and the Defense Logistics Agency, has prepared this report in accordance with the statutory requirements listed at the end of the introduction.

In reporting on the DERP’s status in FY97, the focus is on the road to Site Closeout. The DERP is faced with the challenge of performing environmental restoration at 27,454 identified sites at 1,767 installations and 2,541 Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) properties across the nation and in U.S. territories. To ensure that resources and efforts produce optimal value, the program focuses

squarely on the finish line: getting sites cleaned up, returning properties to productive use, and completing the program. The key program concepts—reducing risk to human health and the environment through Relative Risk Site Evaluation, setting goals and implementing performance metrics to measure the program’s progress, devolved funding authority, and stakeholder participation—are discussed throughout the report.

Progress toward Site Closeout is measured by the number of sites with Remedies in Place (RIP) and by the number of sites where response is complete. A site is counted as RIP when the cleanup remedy (Remedial Action) has been constructed and is operating successfully. In some cases, a site moves immediately from RIP to Response Complete (RC), which indicates that cleanup is complete. In other cases, Remedial Action Operations—the continued operation of a remedy until cleanup goals are met—are needed before the site can be deemed RC. Completed sites, however, may sometimes require continued long-term monitoring of contaminant levels. RIP and RC information is highlighted throughout this report to demonstrate DoD’s program accomplishments. The DERP FY97 report also discusses emerging challenges for the program, including changes in laws, regulations, and policies affecting the program.

FY97 was a transition year for the devolvement of the Defense Environmental Restoration Account (DERA). The centralized DERA account was partitioned into five Component Environmental Restoration (ER) accounts: Army, Navy, Air Force, FUDS, and the continuing Defense-wide account.

Decentralizing funding authority means that more accountability and responsibility are vested in the Components. Each individual Component can now provide closer oversight over its funding and can prioritize resources with primary emphasis on relative risk reduction.

Another important principle of the DoD cleanup program is the enhancement of working relationships with regulators and with the communities surrounding installations.

This effort continued to be a priority in FY97. DoD believes that a successful cleanup program must include ongoing partnerships based on mutual trust and cooperation. Community involvement and cooperative activities with states and tribal nations are firmly embedded in the restoration process.

Although the Department has advocated stable funding, levels of funding for the five ER accounts will increase in the near future as a result of the expiration of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) account, scheduled for the end of FY01. The total amount needed for completion of BRAC cleanup activities is estimated at approximately \$4.3 billion (FY98-completion). DoD Components are programming funds for these cleanup activities in the appropriate Component Environmental Restoration account.

STATUTORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This FY97 Defense Environmental Restoration Program Annual Report to Congress was prepared by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security) in response to the requirements of 10 U.S.C. §2702(d), 42 U.S.C. §9620(e)(5) (CERCLA §120 (e)(5)), 10 U.S.C. §2706 (SARA §211), and Public Law 104-201 §325(h).

This report also contains a supplement detailing the activities and expenditures of DoD's restoration advisory board (RAB) program. The FY97 RAB Supplement was prepared in response to the requirements of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997. Finally, although the Defense and State Memorandum of Agreement funding requirements of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996, amending SARA §211(d), do not require response until the FY98 report, DoD presents information in this report to fulfill those reporting requirements. Specific statutory reporting information can be found in Appendix E.